

*REMARKS*

The rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-22 as being incomplete under the second paragraph of 35 USC is respectfully traversed. None of the independent claims omit essential structural cooperative relationships of elements. For example, independent claim 1 defines a filtration system comprising first and second continuous flowpaths. Independent claim 10 defines a filtration system comprising a respective filter flowpath and first and second continuous flowpaths. Independent claim 19 defines a filtration system comprising a respective filter flowpath and a manifold connected for circulation of fluid. Finally, independent claim 22 defines a filtration system comprising a respective filter flowpath, a manifold, a first and second continuous flowpaths. The use of the word “flowpath”, a broad structural term that means any arrangement of one or more elements that define a passage for fluids, provides a structural relationship for these claims.

The rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-22 as being indefinite under the second paragraph of 35 USC § 112 is also respectfully traversed. For example, claim 1 is both complete, as noted above, and clear. The term flowpath may be broad but is a well understood term of art. Claim 2 specifies that the filtration means of the first continuous flowpath includes a tangential filtration means and the filtration means of the second continuous flowpath includes a tangential filtration means. Claim 3 specifies that a filter medium, i.e., at least one filter medium, is common to both the first and second continuous flowpaths. Claim 5 specifies that the filtration means comprises a plurality of filters, the filter medium common to the first and second continuous flowpath is associated with at least one but not all of the plurality of filters, and the remaining ones of the plurality of filters are included in the first but not the second continuous flowpath. Claim 6 is a proper dependent claim according to MPEP § 608.01(n) III. Claim 7 specifies that the system comprises a manifold connected to each filter. The manifold may be an inlet manifold, an outlet manifold, or both. Claim 10 specifies that the second continuous flowpath has a lower volume than the first continuous flowpath, whether or not the elements “are smaller in structure”. Claim 11 has been amended to correct a typographical error, changing “nuclides” to “includes”. Claim 13 specifies that the fluid drained is the “fluid from the or each filter flowpath not included in the second continuous flowpath.” Claim 14 has been amended to correct a typographical error, changing “include din” to “included in”.

The rejection of claims 19-21 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by EP 0095850 A1 (hereinafter EP ‘850) is respectfully traversed because EP ‘850 fails to disclose each and every element of independent claim 19. For example, claim 19 defines a filtration system comprising a manifold connected to each filter for circulation of fluid through the manifold and, in parallel, the filter flowpaths. EP ‘850 fails to disclose or suggest parallel flow

through the module 12 and the module 16 (See page 13, lines 19-24). Consequently, EP '850 fails to anticipate any of claims 19-21.

The rejection of claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10, and 13 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 0095850 A1 (hereinafter EP '850) is respectfully traversed. Both independent claim 1 and independent claim 10 define filtration systems in which a second continuous flowpath has a lower volume than a first continuous flowpath. Regardless of how much fluid circulates in the filter 12, nothing in EP '850 teaches the volume of the circulation loop through the module 12 or the volume of the circulation loop through the module 16. Consequently, EP '850 fails to disclose or suggest filtration systems in which a second continuous flowpath has a lower volume than a first continuous flowpath, as claimed in independent claims 1 and 10. Consequently, it is respectfully contended that claims 1-3, 5-7, 9, 10 and 13 are patentable over EP '850.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I, John M. Belz, hereby certify that this Amendment (along with any documents referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria VA, 22313-1450.

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